



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

M I C H I G A N

EDUCATING AND ADVOCATING FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

Testimony before the
House Ethics and Elections Committee

April 22, 2009

Re: HB 4097 and HB 4367

The League of Women Voters of Michigan has long supported bills which offer voters the opportunity to vote absentee without demonstrating a qualifying reason for doing so. The League promotes simplification of the election process and provisions to increase the ease and accessibility of voting, such as on-request absentee voting.

After the 2000 election, the League undertook a survey of local election officials in order to ascertain the needs of Michigan's election system. The number one need was encouraging and training qualified poll workers. The second was broadening access to absentee ballots. The League found that when absentee ballots were used by more voters in a jurisdiction, the over-all election turnout was also higher. We believe that "no excuse" absentee ballot availability is an important part of improving Michigan's election system.

We thank the Chair for taking up House Bills 4097 and 4367 in the Ethics and Elections Committee and urge the Committee members to vote to report these bills and support them on the floor.